1: Rattray
618

FE11 Tallensi FE11
Kusase

[Information concerning the groups which Rattray calls "clans" will be found in category 614.]

2: Fortes

FE11 Tallensi FE11

618

[For information on clan-barrios, see category 116, pp. 40-65, 71-75, 78-105, 108-113, 116-120, 125-128, 136-137, 147-148, 150-152 160-161, 165-166, 169-170, 189-191, 205-206, 241, 245-249]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
FE11 Tallensi FE11

173 622 304 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief performs sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 565 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 128 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *tey* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *tey* (town, Nankanse *teya*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Mey* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf* (python), clans.

173 784 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan), but I also taboo *sakur* and *mey*. My ancestor *Tamperypeleg* (white-

[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
FE11 Tallensi FE11
NAMNAM

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* (python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of *yi zut* (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* (Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization that emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

●618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or sub-clan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔŋaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage.

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved.

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grandmother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly

[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

and convergence, every clan puts an egocentric interpretation upon its relations with other clans. These interpretations are compounded of prejudice, conventional opinions, traditional attitudes, and personal values; but they conform to a pattern nevertheless. Lacking a central machinery of government and a common allegiance, the Tale settlements have no permanent political relations with one another. Even the Administration has been able to impose only a limited and superficial degree of coördination. Traditionally and to this day the heads of clans coöperate in certain contingencies or in certain periodically recurrent ritual situations only. For the rest local autonomy is absolute. The upshot is that the political relations of the Tallensi are a sum of the political relations of each settlement with its neighbors. This means first, that geography is an important factor in their politics, and second, that rigid political frontiers do not exist.

A glance at the political geography of the clans with which the present paper is mainly concerned is therefore essential.

These Tale settlements fall into two major groups. On the one hand are the clans known as the Namoos, on the other the Tallis clans. The principal settlement of the Namoos is at Tongo, which was founded, according to the tradition stereotyped throughout Taleland, by Mosur, who fled thither from the Mampuru country in the south, probably over two centuries ago. Mosur was the ancestor of all the people of Tongo and of several settlements colonized from there. Later immigrants from Mampuru established co-clans of Tongo.

The Tallis (i.e. the "real Tallensi") can be subdivided into two groups, those living north of Tongo, the principal settlement of whom is at Baari; and those living on and around the Tong Hills, whom I call the Hill Tallis. The Gbizug lineage is in a special category, as we shall see. Tallis traditions attribute diverse origins to their clans. Four clans, including Baari, Gbizug, and Wakyi, claim primacy of rank in virtue of the fact that their ancestors emerged from the earth or descended from heaven, and were there when Mosur arrived. The other clans are offshoots of these, or of immigrant origin. The Tallis have an ingenious system of clan concatenation, based on a fiction of kinship. Broadly speaking, every lineage of every clan is linked to a lineage of every neighboring Tallis clan by a fiction of half-brotherhood which binds them to reciprocity of certain privileges and obligations, prohibits intermarriage, and especially unites them in a common religious cult. The Namoos clans conform in all respects to the classical definition of a clan; the others must be designated thus for brevity's sake and for want of a term which will convey how they deviate from the prototype.